2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16

CHAPTER II

1. The Mountains of Li-chiang

according to the *Li-chiang fu chih lüeh*

(上 ch. 4, fols. 23A–24B)

Wu-lieh Shan 烏烈山 (the Na-khi Ghügh-lä Ngyu) is 15 li east of the city. On this mountain is a temple called Niang-niang Miao 娘娘廟, where barren women come to pray for children. A large figure of Niang-niang sung-tzu 送子 (Matron who brings children) is exhibited there, on which the women throw stones. The goddess Niang-niang is then usually dressed with new clothes by the worshippers. The place is only frequented by Na-khi women still able to bear children.

Tung Shan 東山[1] (East Mountain) bounds the district of Li-chiang on the east, 20 li from the city. The two mountains (Tung and Wu-lieh Shan) stand side by side, with a saddle between them, and appear as if bowing to the city.

San-t'ai Shan 三台山,[2] also known as Li-chiang An Shan 案山 (Table Mountain) and Nan Shan 南山 (South Mountain), is situated 15 li south of the city. Near it is the hamlet of La-ts'ü-wùa. It is very beautiful and has three prominent peaks of different heights.

Shih-tzu Shan 獅子山 (Lion Mountain) also has the name Huang Shan 黃山 (Yellow Mountain), and in Na-khi it is called Wua-gkv-mbu. It lies one li west of Li-chiang and is the property of the Mu family. Ancient cypresses grow scattered over the hill which is about 100 feet in height and 8,300 feet above sea level. From its summit a beautiful view can be had over Li-chiang and the north-western part of the Li-chiang plain and snow range (Plates 50 and 54). A road passing over it leads to Chung-tien and Wei-hsi. The former yamen of the Na-khi chiefs lies at its foot, facing east.

Near the top of Shih-tzu Shan, but on the western slope, there is a temple called P'u-te t'an 普德壇,[3] built during the reign of Chao Tsung 昭宗 of the

[1] To this range belongs also an isolated, very sharp, triangular peak, known to the Na-khi as Dto-ma Ngyu; it is thus named on account of its resemblance to a *dto-ma*, (Tibetan, *gtor-ma*). This is an offering to the gods by the Dto-mbas as well as Lamas, in the shape of a pyramid of barley-flour dough mixed with butter. This mountain stands to the north-east of Li-chiang and is a conspicuous landmark. Near it is the village of Gv-dtu and therefore the mountain is often spoken of as Gv-dtu Dto-ma Ngyu, but is also known as Tung-shan Dto-ma Ngyu.

[2] San-t'ai (Three terraces) is the name for the three pairs of stars of the Great Bear, and it is possible that the peaks are called after these stars, though *t'ai* also means eminent, exalted.

[3] The word *t'an* (altar) is equivalent to the Na-khi *d'a*, as in *Muaŋ-bpō d'a* (altar or place in which Heaven is propitiated). The words P'u-te are undoubtedly the same as the Na-khi P'u-dtu, the name of a clan which performs the propitiation of Heaven at a different time from that of the other Na-khi clans, namely, on the 5th day of the first moon. The Chinese P'u-te t'an is thus the same as the Na-khi P'u-dtu d'a (altar of the P'u-dtu). The above mentioned

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The goddess of Mercy, Kuan-Yin 觀音, who gives sons to her worshippers *sung tsz niang-niang* 送子娘娘, also called *san p'o niang-niang* 三婆娘娘 *or san hsiao* 三霄, is believed to be in the house for the first three days after the confinement; at the end of this time the father makes her an offering of wine, incense and paper, behind the bedroom door, where the goddess is supposed to lodge. 844 782

At the end of ten days the the father's mother and other relatives are invited to a feast, and presents of rice, eggs and chickens are brought to the family. 846 852

At the end of a month a feast is given, called *t'ang ping* (or *mi* or *yüeh*) *chiu* 湯餅 (or 米 or 月) 酒; all those who have given presents are invited. After this the mother may go to the kitchen or the well; before this many will not speak to her, and Buddhist devotees are especially fearful about doing so.

After fulfilling forty days, *man sz̆ü-shih t'ien* 滿四十天, the mother may visit her friends and show off the baby. In complimenting the parents it is safe to say that the baby is ugly 醜, or to use any other derogatory terms, so that the demons will not want it.

Having fulfilled 120 days the mother may go to the temple and give thanks to the idols.

At the end of the first year 滿週歲 *man chou sui*, the mother-in-law sends presents to the child. The old custom of this season was to lay before the child objects representing different occupations in life, and his training would afterwards be directed according to the object he grasped. This was called *chua nien* 抓年, grasping the year. 431 851

The above are some of the customs connected with ordinary cases. Women who are barren or son-less employ various methods to obtain such issue. 842 782

They beg a prayer-tally, 求簽 *ch'iu ch'ien* from a particular idol, take it home and keep it on the family altar. These tallies are notched pieces of bamboo, kept at the idol shrine for divination purposes.

They become vegetarians; this often means that they also distribute much rice to the poor. There are many kinds of vegetarian vows, such as *Kuan-yin chai* 觀音齋, (kept on the 9th, or by some on the 2nd, 6th and 9th, of each month); 842 795 261

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842 785 261 *chên-wu chai* 眞武齋, (a monthly fast, on the 1st days of the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th moons); *Tsao-wang chai* 竈王齋 (1st, 15th, 24th of each moon); *chiu huang chai* 九皇齋 and *pei-tou chai* 北斗齋, (9th moon, first 9 days, or whole moon); *ch'êng huang chai* 城皇齋, (1st and 15th of each moon); *yüeh-lo chai* 月落齋, (last day of each moon); *jih-lo chai* 日落齋, (daily till sunset); *ch'ang chai* 長齋, (for 3 years, or sometimes for life).

Some, in the hope of progeny, do various good deeds, such as making roads or building bridges.

842 778 Anti-abortion charms *an-t'ai fu* 安胎符, are sought by women who believe they have the *pao-t'ai sha* 包胎煞 or the *mai érh sha* 埋兒煞; that is, that they are under the curse of abortion or still-birth. The sorcerer is called in, and the woman has to give him a pair of her trousers, a pint of rice, five kinds of coloured thread and an egg; this last is taken home by the sorcerer and worshipped. All must be carried out without the husband's knowledge.

Others *p'ei hsiung ching* 佩雄精 carry a charm made up of the purest *hsiung huang* 雄黃 (realgar).

Some make a pilgrimage to a sacred mountain 朝山 *ch'ao shan*; there they steal a baby-idol 童子 *t'ung-tzŭ*, or a *lo-han* 羅漢, and take it home. They also spend money on building temples or in printing books which extol the idols, such as the *pei-tou ching* 北斗經, the *Tsao-wang ching* 竈王經 or the *Kuan-yin ching* 觀音經.

Another way is to steal the shoes or underclothing of the wife of the city god, or of Kuan-Yin. These are taken home, put under the pillow and slept on. The virtue is supposed to lie in the fact that they are stolen.

An axe is hung on the underside of the bed in the hope of thus obtaining a son, *ch'uang hsia hsüan fu* 床下懸斧. Or the ox sinew from a crossbow is worn as a girdle; 牛筋弦帶 *niu-chin-hsien tai*.

787 842 Childless people also call in a fortune-teller to examine the horoscopes of the couple to see if they match; *k'ai nien kêng* 開年庚 or *p'ai sz̆ chu* 排四柱. If any of the fine elements are lacking, some person is invited to stand surety. For example, if the element gold should be missing, some one with

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the gold radical in his name or someone with plenty of the gold element in his horoscope will be asked to be surety. Or butchers, priests, scholars and military men are invited if the elements show a weakness in those directions. 787 842

In cases where the marriage date has proved unlucky 年月不吉 *nien-yüeh pu chi*, the whole process of finding a lucky day and holding the marriage ceremony is gone through again, that sons may be born.

When the unfitness is in the girl's horoscope, making the union unlucky, friends set to work to prove that her nativity characters 八字 *pa tzŭ* have been incorrect from birth, 婚頭錯了 *hun t'ou ts'o-liao;* a change is made and the marriage ceremony is gone through a second time.

A barren woman goes to the temple of the goddess of Mercy, *sung tzŭ Kuan-Yin* 送子觀音, who always has plenty of children around her. She pulls out some of her own hair, and ties it round the arm or neck of a child-idol 拴童子 shuan t'ung-tsu. When she leaves she calls the spirit of this idol to follow her home. Sometimes she goes to the priest and gives him her special reasons for desiring a son, and she receives from him a *tan* 單, which document is then burnt as an offering to the idol. 842 782

Sometimes arrangements are made with a family that has plenty of children to buy from it a new-born babe, a few hundreds of taels being perhaps paid for a healthy male child. As soon as born it is carried in the night to its new mother, who goes through a feigned confinement 假裝坐月 *chia chuang tso yüeh*. The child is reared on sugar and water and other concoctions. 597 842

Families sometimes obtain a son in exchange for a girl and a liberal sum in hard cash. In such cases it is always an insult to speak of the boy as adopted.

Besides the above efforts made by the family itself to procure sons, the friends of the family may do a great deal by special presents. Thus, a melon may be placed in a chair and escorted with music, red umbrella and much ceremony to the house of the childless people. There it is put on the family altar. If a child is born later a feast must be provided for those who gave the melon, or there will be bad feeling. 842 788

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788 842 Again, a calf from the Spring ox (see chapter on the Four Seasons) may be presented. This dummy calf is obtained as the result of much wrangling, put in a sedan-chair and taken with music and fire-crackers to some childless family.

At the service held for the release of a soul three basins of rice are used. At the close of the ceremony these bowls of rice are wrangled for, the strongest or smartest getting them. A basin of this rice is then taken to the house of a childless friend, who puts it on the family altar and worships it in the hope that a son may be born to him.

At the end of the Feast of Lanterns the eyes of the dragon lantern, or the *pao* 寶, precious thing from the dragon's mouth, or the eyes of the lion lantern may be presented, and are considered very efficacious. (See under New Year).

231 842 788 When a family pig gets measles the owner makes a vow at the shrine of Hung-chu hsien 紅猪仙, (an image of a man riding a pig). If the pig gets well a paper pig is offered as thanks. This paper pig is often taken afterwards to the home of a son-less family.

These beliefs are very real. I know several people who bear the name of *chu êrh-tzŭ* 猪兒子 or *niu êrh-tzŭ* 牛兒子, pig-son or calf-son, because they were born after the calf or pig had been taken to their homes.

842 778 753 At the *Tien shih tung* 天師洞 temple there is a famous *pai-kuo shu* 白菓樹 (ginko tree), twigs of which are much used for the same purpose; but any trees which have shown healing virtues 顯神 *hsien shên* are u d. The twigs are kept on the family altar for months at a time in hope that a son may be the result. Some trees gain a sudden notoriety through the priests paying someone to hang up red cloth and paper boots with a false statement that they have been healed of disease through worshipping the tree.

842 778 Sometimes one of the Eighteen Lo-han is taken from a temple and given to a childless pair. If a son is born this idol is returned to the temple with a fresh coat of paint on it and with an offering. The priests like this, as it gives the temple a reputation and increases the number of their devotees.

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In some places a meeting called *t'ung-tzŭ hui* 童子會 is held on the 3rd of the 3rd moon, when women who have obtained sons by taking away a child-idol from Kuan-Yin's shrine return the images to the goddess. When worship is finished these idols are carried off to be given to other childless families, and that night the streets are lively with processions of this kind going to their destinations.

Another present with the same object is a turnip with the leaves on; this is put on the family altar and incense and paper offered to it.

The piece of wood used by a sorcerer to hang his chart on when exorcising a spirit is also regarded as a useful present to a childless family.

At Ch'eng-tu 成都 it used to be the custom on 5th of the 5th moon for youths to pelt with plums women of 'doubtful reputation.' These plums were then got hold of by other people and sent to friends anxious for sons. The origin of the idea is said to be in the story that the mother of Lao Tzŭ dreamed before the birth of her illustrious son that she had eaten a plum.

At the New Year lighted lamps are hung on trees or high poles; they are believed to attract homeless, wandering spirits, and they are afterwards given to childless families.

At the fast for protection against fire and epidemics small lighted lanterns soaked in oil are set adrift on the river. These are sometimes stolen and presented to some home lacking children, where they are kept on the family altar.

In some temples there is an apartment called the 玉皇樓 *Yü-huang lou*, the Gemmeous Emperor's dwelling. Before his image hangs a lantern. This is sometimes stolen and presented to a childless family. A new lantern is presented to the temple if a child is born. Such lanterns, 玉皇燈 *Yü-huang têng*, are also hung in numbers in an orchard or elsewhere with the object of securing a good crop.

During the first moon lamps are lighted before the shrines of the *t'u ti shên* 土地神 or gods of the soil. After being used they are often presented to childless people in the firm belief that children will then be born.